(26) April 1908

CLEEVE HOUSE,
MELKSHAM,
WILTS.

[Monday]
April 20th

My Billy.

I have been reading your MS. & so has Clive. I believe he has many small criticisms to give you. I have marked two places only I think which I will show you. I cannot give you real criticism of course but I think it is extraordinarily interesting I like the part about

Mother test. It seems to me that you really set into your stride when you begin to write about her. I think, as far as I can tell, that you have given a very good idea of her - much the best I have seen. I think you also give a very fine idea of Stella. But she is more difficult to get hold of. Some of your phrases

about her Ring has back to me very vividly. but it is impossible for me to know quite what they would mean to anyone who didn't know her. But I should think you have made her a very real person & also have given the relationship between the two very well. Of course I can only talk as do laymen about a portrait & tell you whether I think it like or not. My word, what a scene at Glorvina it becomes after the tragedies!

[illegible] into the
midst of all that awful
underworld of emotional
scenes & irritations & difficulties again as I read.
How did we ever get
out of it? It seems to
me almost too ghastly &
unnatural now ever to
have existed. One is even
inclined to think dull
commonplaceness better, but
perhaps it was chiefly
George's commonplaceness
that made it so awful.
I hope no one will ever
have to go through it again.
I am hoping to go on
here more to read for

CLEEVE HOUSE,
MELKSHAM,
WILTS.

The relations between me & Wakes with be nicest imaginable! I think you have got the whole thing remarkably well constructed - especially considering what a forest of people & events you had to clear out & put into order. You have got them all very well together & the whole story moves on in good order & is an artistic whole - so it seems to one. I shall look you much

more when I see you -
but I leave all literary
criticism to Clive.

I had yours letter from
St Ives this morning.

Don't give up the best
bed-room, for you will
want it to sit in probably,
& Clive & I shall want
separate rooms. He tried
here sleeping in the dressing-
room. But gave it up, as
he couldn't get to sleep again
after nice being waked by
Julian - so info you get us

another room? As we shant want a large double room, you had much better keep the one you are in, in case you want to write in it.

We shall get to St Ives at 9-10. on Friday. Will you order a shut vehicle to bring me & the nurse & baby from the station with me box & perambulator & unless they should arrive beforehand also another two boxes. Julian's cradle & bath? These last we shall send off in advance so they may come before we do. but if not we

shall find them at St. Ives
& bring them up with us.

Poor Billy. I am sorry
for your practical joke which
you hate although you do
despatch them with great
brilliance. but I dont think
there is anything else.

I suppose your landlady
will send up my usual
meals to her room -

Otherwise there is nothing
unusual.

I shall look for your
handsome red tie & visit
once at St. Ives - Oh God
what a joyful sight.

Yours BB.

T. PARSONS 3.2.73

22 April 1908

CLEEVE HOUSE,
SEEND,
MELKSHAM.

Wednesday.

My. Billy.

Today we actually begin the packing. Thank God. in order to send the things off tomorrow morning I forgot yesterday to ask you to see that a fire is lighted in the nursery room before we arrive. I also to ask Mrs R. to have some

milk is that we may
make chocolate at night.
I am ordering some chocolate
& some biscuits from the
Stores - & we can make the
chocolate ourselves with my spirit
lamp if the mill provide
a jug of milk.

This morning Clive had a
letter from you - What a
bore to have cold weather.
I hoped for delicious balmy

Cornish climate. I had a marvellous letter from Waller giving me his first impressions of Rome - which consisted of the fact that it was raining & [illegible] the sun was really beginning to shine. Still there were many dark clouds about & it seemed likely to rain all day. It had done nothing but rain since he arrived a few hours before he wrote. But he would write again as soon as he had something more interesting to say. I have never received such a marvellous specimen from him before. Even the sage bush didn't

occurs as often as the rain.

To tantalize you (I hope) I must tell you that Clive is at this moment busy with a pencil on your M.S. I think however that the pencil is chiefly used for typewriting mistakes. But we doubt there will be many valuable criticisms too.

Give my love to my grey dog. I hope he won't smell on Friday. Can't you induce him to take to the sea?

Maria is very much puzzled by the transparent washes.

Yr VB

(1908)

Trevose House.

46, Gordon Square,
Bloomsbury.

May 2nd

My Billy.

I'm afraid you will curse when you find that you left your book behind you. We are sending it off this morning & it ought to reach you on Monday morning. I meant to send it by passenger train so that you might have it tonight but we were too late to

catch the 10.25. & they
would not deliver it
tonight if we sent it
by the 11-50. & so it may
as well go by post.

After all you might as
well - or better - be here -
I can't resist saying -

In the hurry of your
departure, we did not
notice that the second
butchers bill was for 4 the
weeks - not only for the

second week. Therefore you save me about 5/- too much. Clive gave you 2/6 which will do for part of this. & as I know you meant to keep the girl 5/- & only gave her 2/6 I will give her another 2/6 & say you asked me to as you had not enough change. This will make us straight & I expect the girl ought to have 5/-

As far as I have got

discovered. there are only
your night gown & a sponge
bag left behind - which
I will send on & anything
else that may come
to light.

Oh Billy. how do you
ever get about the world
by yourself? I think
you had really better
marry a practical man
who will pick up your
leavings

Yours V.B.

Trevose House

46, Gordon Square,
Bloomsbury.

May 4th

My Billy.

Your journey sounds rather terrible. It will be the very devil with Julian, even if we do book seats. I wonder why on earth the trains should be full now. However I wish book seats & trust to God. The best of the weather departed with you & it now alternately rains or is rather stuffy & grey. I had a letter from Saxon

I think I shall write you learning into me to-day & make such a large parcel. I doubt if it will go by post. & I don't suppose you want any Athenaeum &c.

Trevose House

46, Gordon Square,
Bloomsbury.

May 4th

My Billy.

Your journey sounds rather terrible. It will be time very dear with Julian. even if we do book seats. I wonder why on earth the trains should be full now. However I wish book seats & trust to God. The best of the weather departed with you & it now alternately rains & is rather stuffy & grey I had a letter from Saxon

I think I shall write your learnings into me today I made such a large parcel. I should if I get it by post. & I don't suppose you want any Athenaeum at present

yesterday & today I have sent him a pot of cream, as he seemed to relish yours so much. The poor little man ought to be fed upon Cornish cream & sent to the Scillys for a month or two I suppose he was only away about 3 days.

Your imaginary conversation by the rhododendrons has not yet taken place. It is sad to see how we miss you. This morning Clive managed painfully

to limp down to Hamburgs
where we bought our tea.
Of course I must say why
he had to limp — & now
we have come struggling
back from the beach. where
I did a sketch of the sea
& you dog tormented a
family of children to let
him join their games.
We talk of you & all
your pranks & idiosyncrasies
& gen — eral charms.
I wonder what you have
said about us. "Of
course Nessa was quite
taken up with the baby

Yes. I'm afraid she's losing all her individuality & becoming the usual domestic mother & Clive - Of course I like him very much but his mind is of a peculiarly prosaic & literal type - And they're always making moral judgements about me - However they seem perfectly happy & I expect it's a good thing I didn't stay longer. I was evidently beginning to bore them.

Now Billy - in your humour haven't you uttered one of those sentiments? You seem to have started already in your letter

Yrs V.B.

(27)

Cleeve House

(1908?)

Thursday

(30 July)

46, Gordon Square,

Bloomsbury.

My Billy.

At this moment, it being
soon after 10 a Thursday evening,
you I suppose are sitting in
the midst of the most rare-
fied culture of London - with
Sydney, Lytton & no doubt
Hilton Young all hanging
upon your words. On
the other hand, am listening
to Lena's description of a
tragedy she has been to &
a raffle she has won ( ) can
do it into me small note
of the lovely little cat. I
the speculations of the Bell

family as to the weather to-
morrow when the whole village
& Secord is going to feed
& drink & dance here.
Isn't it a pathetic picture?
Clive I believe is writing to
you too - so you see we both
turn to you for relief.
After you had gone yesterday
Jerry appeared - very fat
& very much pleased with
himself. I can't think why
he came. He only stayed
a few minutes, having been
to call on you first - & he
had no news. We caught
our train - & of course there

was never any real hope of losing it. We found Julian well. but he's rather unhappy with his teeth & change of milk. Dorothy is much better & all else is as usual - the country is a dark green & dusty like its inhabitants but I will say for it that it smells delicious & is very quiet - when Julian lets it be. I hear that the Vicars Close at Wells is the most charming place - old 14th century houses, very becoming to you & Susie. Shall we meet at Bath on Thursday. We have been threatened with Lorna's company when we go to Bath & so are

choosing Thursday as a day
when we know she will have
to attend a large garden-party
I shall say that you can't
only go then.

I have inspected my
studio - which I see will make
time pass much more quickly
here - & will provide a
room into empty walls of
a pleasant coat deckle's eggs
green in which I shall
rest my eyes when they
smart too much under
the combination of new
air & deers' hoofs here.
Oh God - this life amazes me
more & more. Mr Bell is now
settling sleepy over his pot
pot of literature during the
day - the Cornhill inter yours
article in it - (he has not

27 ii

46, Gordon Square,
Bloomsbury.

told me what he thinks of it) Mrs Bell is reading I don't know what. a thick black book probably a novel from the library. Lorna has just come to tea with many yawns. How can people waste their lives like this? It goes on all the year round, all the time that we in London are wondering whether we are growing old & railing at Saxon's dullness. Now Mr Bell is quite asleep. Can it be your article he is reading? After all I don't know that it much matters that peopl-

spend their lives like this.
But it is monstrous & criminal. isn't it. that we should have to spend any portion of ours in this swamp & fog. I must say that since I have been here there have been one or two intermissions - but why should they be intermissions? Did Lytton propose to you this afternoon? & did he say I could send you his poems? I would rather you married him than anyone else. but perhaps

on the whole your genius
requires all your attention.
I hope tomorrow for a
ray of light from the outer
world in the shape of a letter
from you. You won't get
this till tomorrow night.
as I dictate mine in time
to send it by the after-
noon post & it won't get
till tomorrow morning.
Good-bye. my mistress
If you were here perhaps
I'd kiss you —
Yours
Hans.